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President: Mr. Matjila (Vice-President) ..... (South Africa)

Contents

Opening of the segment

Agenda item 9: Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

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In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Mr. Matjila (South Africa), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Opening of the segment

1. **The President**, opening the humanitarian affairs segment on the theme "Restoring humanity, respecting human dignity and leaving no one behind: working together to reduce people's humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability", said that the segment was a unique forum for promoting a better understanding of the complex nature of humanitarian needs and the operational challenges faced in delivering humanitarian assistance. It also provided a major opportunity for Member States and humanitarian partners to discuss how to further strengthen the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance to respond to record levels of need and how to overcome obstacles to reaching those in need.

2. Three high-level panels would be held during the course of the segment: the first would address the impact of armed conflict on children and ways to strengthen the response to meet children's needs; the second would reflect on the challenges, risks and impacts of extreme weather events and climate change on the most vulnerable; and the third would focus on ways to strengthen local capabilities for sustainable outcomes and local resilience and the contribution of humanitarian action in that regard.

3. Humanitarian partners delivered assistance to some of the most vulnerable people on the planet. Human dignity was an important component of humanitarian action, the aim of which was not just to save lives but to empower people to live their lives with dignity and give them an opportunity to rebuild their resilience. In line with the 100th anniversary of the birth of Nelson Mandela and the importance that his own country, South Africa, attached to the issue of children, he wished to show a short video highlighting the centrality of children in Nelson Mandela's work, in the hope that it would inspire concrete action.

4. *A short video featuring Nelson Mandela was shown.*

Agenda item 9: Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance (A/73/78–E/2018/54)

5. **Mr. Lowcock** (Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/73/78-E/2018/54), said that the global humanitarian system was more effective than ever and was saving lives and protecting people on a scale never previously achieved. Response plans were more coordinated, comprehensive and innovative, and there was greater emphasis on anticipatory approaches and early action. Technological advances were propelling swifter, more nimble aid responses. The quality and timeliness of funding had improved, commitments for multi-year and pooled funding had allowed timely and effective action on the ground, and contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund and the country-based pooled funds had reached a record high in 2017.

6. Despite the progress made, the humanitarian system remained under strain. More than 134 million people needed humanitarian assistance, almost three times more than a decade before. Humanitarian organizations were targeting 96 million of the most vulnerable people for help in 2018 but, thus far, only $8 billion of the $25 billion required had been received. Conflicts had increased in number and intensity, and the number of internally displaced persons was rising. In 2017 alone, natural disasters had affected more than 96 million people and caused more than $300 billion in damage, the second highest economic losses on record.

7. To keep pace, the system needed to adapt and improve continually, which called for strengthened collaboration and partnerships. The Secretary-General's reform of the United Nations sought to increase the Organization's effectiveness and help reduce some of the underlying drivers of humanitarian crises. The aim of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to leave no one behind, incorporated the recognition that humanitarian crises threatened to reverse the development progress made in recent decades. The system had a major opportunity to change course and it must take it. But to be successful, serious problems needed to be addressed, including conflict and the behavior of belligerents in war; the scourge of protracted food crises; the growing number of forcibly displaced persons; and the need for a more anticipatory financing model to meet needs amid growing intensity and frequency of natural disasters caused by climate change.

8. In an environment increasingly marked by conflict, neutral and impartial humanitarian action was more important than ever. The brutality of modern wars was an outrage. Civilians were deliberately killed with shocking intensity and frequency, and international humanitarian law and the fundamental rules of distinction, proportionality and precaution were disregarded with apparent impunity. The international community must do more to ensure that political actors and fighting parties respected international

humanitarian law and the norms intended to protect civilians in conflict.

9. Collective and coordinated efforts were needed to improve food security. Some 124 million people needed food assistance, and droughts in the Sahel region had left 5.8 million people in urgent need of food and livelihood assistance, but response efforts were underfunded. Better and lasting solutions were also needed to help internally displaced persons. In line with General Assembly resolution 72/182, States needed to strengthen their efforts to explore ways to better address the needs of internally displaced persons and their host communities.

10. Addressing the latest challenges required a move towards more anticipatory action and a greater join-up in the response. Given that disasters and emergencies were largely predictable, adjustments to the way of operating could reduce their impacts. Anticipatory and early action concerned the delivery of assistance as well as the way in which emergency preparedness and early response were financed. Drawing on lessons learned from the 2015–2016 El Niño response, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs was exploring options to apply more anticipatory data-driven models of allocating funding, including through the Central Emergency Response Fund, to kickstart early action and prevent hazards from becoming fully-fledged disasters. Partnerships with Governments, regional organizations, insurance firms, international financial institutions and local organizations were invaluable to that approach.

11. There were no humanitarian solutions to humanitarian crises; the solutions lay in the realms of peace and security, politics and development. The system must ensure the highest standards of behaviour towards those it served. In that context, active measures were being taken to eliminate the scourge of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. In line with the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance approach, the Organization was committed to ensuring that people in crises felt safe and respected and had access to the assistance they needed without fear of exploitation or abuse by any aid worker.

12. **Ms. Elgarf** (Observer for Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that General Assembly resolution 46/182 remained the global framework for coordinating humanitarian assistance. The Group of 77 and China was concerned at the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures that were contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations. It called on all States and parties to comply with international humanitarian law to protect and assist civilians, including in occupied territories, and to respect the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

13. International cooperation and support remained indispensable but should seek to strengthen local and national mechanisms, rather than undermine or replace them, so that Governments could respond promptly and effectively and drive positive change. Affected States had a primary role and should take the lead in initiating, organizing and coordinating humanitarian assistance. He welcomed the elements of the draft resolution that built on the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the New Urban Agenda; the draft resolution should capitalize on the Council's economic, social and development functions as well as the operational and technical aspects of its work.

14. Amid growing humanitarian need, the Group called for additional, predictable, innovative and diversified humanitarian financing from all sources, including other Member States, organizations and the private sector, to help developing countries enhance their capacities and mobilize their own resources. In particular, it encouraged the United Nations system to use anticipatory financing mechanisms to support effective and timely humanitarian assistance. Insufficient diversity in geographical representation and gender balance in the composition of United Nations humanitarian staff must be addressed. The necessary statistics on humanitarian staff should be readily available, as well as information on what was being done to address those gaps.

15. Relief, recovery, rehabilitation, reconstruction and longer-term development were complementary, and coordination of humanitarian assistance was therefore vital. The humanitarian-development divide must be narrowed but it was important not to blur the line that separated the mandates and priorities of each. The Group of 77 and China was convinced that there was a way for humanitarian and development actors to work more closely together while performing their respective roles effectively, in accordance with their comparative advantages.

16. **Ms. Stoeva** (Observer for Bulgaria), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, Liechtenstein, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that addressing the challenges facing the humanitarian system would require strong political leadership and

decisive global action on conflict prevention and resolution, climate change, advancing the 2030 Agenda, turning early warning into early action and building the resilience of vulnerable populations.

17. A forward-looking humanitarian system that mobilized targeted resources in a more systematic way would be better able to anticipate crises and disasters. Financing and implementing early action could save lives, avoid unnecessary suffering and lead to more effective humanitarian preparedness and response. Coherence and cooperation in the operationalization of the humanitarian-development nexus must be improved, while respecting humanitarian principles.

18. The European Union and its member States would continue to advocate for the protection of populations affected by conflict and respect for international humanitarian and human rights law, as well as enhanced efforts to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian and medical personnel. People should be at the centre of humanitarian action; the needs of marginalized groups must be addressed; and women, girls, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups must be involved throughout the response cycle. It was vital that States delivered on the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit and the commitments made under the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing.

19. With regard to forced displacement, measures were needed to ease pressure on host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, expand access to third-country solutions and establish conditions for safe return to countries of origin. Addressing internal displacement should also be a priority.

20. She welcomed the increased focus on children, youth, older persons and disabilities in the draft resolution to be considered by the Council as well as improvements with regard to early warning and early action, internally displaced persons and education. Nonetheless, the European Union and its member States had hoped for more progress in the areas of international humanitarian law and unhindered humanitarian access, including with regard to the impact of counter-terrorism measures on the delivery of principled humanitarian aid. Of particular concern was the regression in Council discussions on sexual and reproductive health, given that such services were a life-saving measure. In that connection, the failure to reach an agreement on the Minimum Initial Service Package for Reproductive Health was regrettable.

21. **Ms. Gill** (Observer for Australia), speaking also on behalf of Indonesia, Mexico, the Republic of Korea and Turkey (referred to as MIKTA), said that conflict and natural disasters around the world continued to inflict human suffering and displacement on an unprecedented scale and were preventing the achievement of a peaceful world capable of achieving sustainable development. Swift action was urgently needed. Member States and other stakeholders needed to work across different sectors and regions to ensure a collective response to humanitarian emergencies. Indonesia, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia stood ready to share best practices during a segment that provided an important opportunity to make progress on operational and normative issues on the humanitarian policy agenda.

22. The call to action set out in the Agenda for Humanity must be heard. Those five countries supported accelerated implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, which meant, among other things, anticipating crises instead of just waiting for them. To save lives and protect assets, States must do more to ensure that development investment was risk-informed; facilitate public-private partnerships; enable risk-based investment; invest in preparedness before a crisis; and provide incentives to reward risk-informed local and national early action.

23. At the World Humanity Summit, gender equality, fulfilment of the human rights of women and girls, and their empowerment in political, humanitarian and development spheres at all levels had been affirmed as a universal responsibility. The promise of the Sustainable Development Goals could not be realized for all women and girls if they were not included in humanitarian action as decision makers. In addition, humanitarian response must be non-discriminatory and inclusive of persons with disabilities.

24. **Mr. Margaryan** (Observer for Armenia) said that restoring humanity and respecting human dignity were priorities, and the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence in humanitarian action must be upheld. Unimpeded humanitarian access was vital; attempts to politicize it and refusals to cooperate constituted a deliberate attempt to hinder efforts to protect and assist those in need.

25. Community engagement remained a priority in overall coordination of response. The Mission of Armenia had hosted a panel discussion that morning on the role of social media and information and communications technologies in engaging populations affected by crisis. As the deliberations had shown, digital communications channels were helping millions of people to remain in contact and providing access to vital information, and technology-based solutions were rapidly changing the landscape of humanitarian response. The United Nations system needed to do more

to engage those populations and support those who helped ensure their voices were heard. In that regard, Armenia strongly condemned all forms of violence or threats against reporters and media workers, including citizen journalists and bloggers.

26. It was critical for the United Nations to adapt its prevention function and build greater resilience. As a consistent supporter of the concept and practice of prevention, Armenia welcomed the increased focus on early action; denial of past crimes and hate speech were among the warning signs of the potential for mass atrocity crimes and conflict.

27. Crimes that went unpunished were prone to recurrence. Armenia had been leading the campaign within the United Nations to reinforce implementation of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Armenia also hosted an annual global forum against the crime of genocide, which, in 2018, would focus on the role of education in eliminating hatred, intolerance and xenophobia. Every year, it bestowed a national award on an outstanding humanitarian and every year on 9 December, it marked the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime.

28. Lastly, the international community needed to do more collectively to mitigate crisis situations, and civil society efforts should be supported at the global level, given their important contribution to humanitarian and development response.

29. **Ms. Carenza** (Italy) said that collective action was the only effective way to tackle global challenges such as protracted crises and cyclical natural disasters. Italy supported a holistic, results-based and person-centred approach to humanitarian action that involved coordination among humanitarian stakeholders, comprehensive joint needs assessments and national and local ownership.

30. The most vulnerable people, including minors, persons with disabilities, older persons and women, must be protected in emergency situations. International humanitarian principles must be respected; attacks on civilian premises such as schools and medical facilities contravened international humanitarian law, and those responsible must be held accountable. The provision of humanitarian access was a sensitive topic but it was an obligation under international humanitarian law and had a crucial impact on the effectiveness of humanitarian aid. Italy also strongly supported mine action, which was an imperative in many conflict and post-conflict situations.

31. The challenges posed by forced displacement required short-term action focused on security and solidarity, and a long-term vision that addressed root causes. Italy promoted an approach that was based on common and shared responsibilities. It viewed Africa as a partner for economic cooperation and an ally in the fight against terrorism and organized crime.

32. By strengthening the connections between development and humanitarian tools, the international community was enhancing its capacity to tackle the root causes of crises and to link relief and rehabilitation to development. Empowering local responders was critical to improving efficiency. Italy was implementing the commitment undertaken at the World Humanitarian Summit to go as local as possible by funding local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) directly. Italy had increased its humanitarian aid budget in recent years, and welcomed innovative funding mechanisms that would encourage social investment from the private sector.

33. Humanitarian action was not a substitute for political solutions. Her delegation strongly supported the sustaining peace approach promoted by the Secretary-General and his appeal to strengthen partnerships in all areas. In that regard, the fundamental role played by women in peacebuilding and stabilization must not be forgotten.

34. **Mr. Prongthura** (Observer for Thailand) said that humanitarian crises persisted around the world, and the most vulnerable were the hardest hit. To address those crises in a comprehensive and integrated manner, a paradigm shift was required at all levels and especially on the ground. The affected Member State, while remaining primarily responsible for the humanitarian situation in its territory, should, together with the United Nations and relevant humanitarian and development actors, promote and ensure full respect for international humanitarian and human rights law. The protection of civilians and humanitarian workers was a priority. Attacks on hospitals and schools must not be tolerated, nor must abuse, gender-based violence or other misconduct, especially when perpetrated by those who had been sent to help. Coordination among agencies providing humanitarian relief must be strengthened, particularly in country teams, and their work should reinforce national and local capacity, not replace it. Most importantly, people must be at the heart of all efforts, from relief through to development. It was vital to create resilient communities that had the opportunity to participate in decisions about their future.

35. Situated in the most disaster-prone region of the world, Thailand attached great importance to effective

and timely disaster management. The highest priority was accorded to building self-resilience and preparedness through its Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, and to fostering sustainable development based on moderation, reasonableness and prudence. Thailand had been working with the other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to expedite the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response and would be hosting one of the three satellite warehouses under the Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN. Thailand viewed investing in early warning infrastructure and building resilience as the way forward. It had contributed on various occasions to funds such as the Central Emergency Response Fund and the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

36. **Ms. Blais** (Canada) said that the number of humanitarian crises had reached unprecedented levels. Canada was extremely concerned by the use of sexual and gender-based violence, famine and denial of humanitarian access as weapons of war. The international community needed to recommit to upholding humanitarian principles and ensuring respect for international humanitarian law. International humanitarian law was a key pillar of the current rules-based international order, yet parties to armed conflict were increasingly violating those rules with apparent impunity. The Group of Seven, under the Canadian presidency, had recently committed to helping increase the capacity of State and non-State partners to implement international humanitarian law effectively if they became parties to conflicts. Canada urged other Member States to make similar commitments.

37. The growing problem of forced displacement must be tackled in a comprehensive manner. Canada was actively promoting the global compacts on refugees and migration, both of which were important given the correlation between the rise in the number of violent conflicts and the rise in displacement. In order to find durable solutions and better address the root causes of forced displacement, the international community must work together and share responsibility for better addressing the needs of all forcibly displaced persons and host communities.

38. It was imperative to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable, including girls and boys, who were especially vulnerable to violence and to recruitment by armed forces, and persons with disabilities. Her delegation urged Member States that had not yet done so to endorse the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.

39. Lastly, all humanitarian action must be gender-responsive. Women and adolescent girls were powerful agents of change. The Whistler Declaration on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action, adopted by the Group of Seven on 2 June 2018, emphasized the importance of supporting their meaningful participation. It was also important to respond to specific needs when addressing vulnerabilities, including by supporting initiatives on preventing and responding to gender-based violence. The Group of Seven had committed to closing gaps in education quality for women and girls living in conflict and crisis, including refugees and displaced persons. That undertaking had been accompanied by an historic investment of $3.8 billion Canadian dollars, including $400 million from Canada alone.

40. **Mr. Besson** (Observer for Switzerland) said that humanitarian workers were finding it extremely difficult to preserve the necessary space to conduct their operations. They had to contend with countless violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, a lack of access to those in need, counter-terrorism measures that contravened humanitarian principles, and deliberate attacks on medical personnel. All parties to conflict must respect international humanitarian law and human rights. In that connection, Switzerland hoped that the process it was facilitating in conjunction with the International Committee of the Red Cross to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law would make a difference.

41. Security Council resolution 2286 (2016) must be fully implemented. Attacks on medical personnel and facilities had devastating consequences for human life and infrastructure. Counter-terrorism measures must not criminalize the provision of medical aid under any circumstances.

42. Although General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system made no reference to humanitarian aid, such reform would probably have an impact on the work of humanitarian coordinators and therefore on United Nations humanitarian action. The development system must therefore increase the synergies between peace, development, humanitarian and human rights actors with a view to achieving joint objectives wherever possible. In most protracted crises, tools were used in parallel and within the same geographical area. It was now important to strengthen the links between the different types of intervention to enhance the effectiveness and impact of joint action. At the same time, however, space must be preserved to enable humanitarian action to continue in accordance with its founding principles.

43. Lastly, Switzerland was pleased that consensus had been reached on the draft resolution to be considered at the close of the segment. A co-facilitator of the draft resolution, her delegation welcomed the strengthened language on responding to needs in the areas of education, disasters and the prevention of gender-based violence. As the draft resolution still did not address all the challenges of humanitarian crises, she nonetheless expressed the hope that Council members would overcome their differences in the next round of negotiations.

44. **Mr. Lindroos** (Observer for Finland) said that it was a time of increased humanitarian needs caused by conflict and natural disasters. Some regions were worse hit than others, but everyone had a responsibility to ensure assistance reached those most in need. Although the humanitarian aid system was more advanced and better equipped than ever before, it was a challenge to find the necessary resources. An even greater challenge, however, was to find better ways to prevent disaster and end conflict and ensure that international humanitarian law was respected. Unimpeded and timely humanitarian access was essential for the safety of aid workers and recipients of humanitarian assistance. Finland was deeply concerned by the rising number of violations of international humanitarian law; there was a serious risk of growing indifference and disregard for basic principles. Finland called on States and other actors to use their influence to reverse that negative trend and would like to see stronger collective action from the international community in that regard.

45. The theme of respecting human dignity and leaving no one behind was a powerful reminder that more must be done to address the situation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian emergencies. The annual meeting of the Global Alliance on Disability Network, held in Helsinki in early 2018, had sent a strong signal about the collective determination of Governments, international organizations and civil society organizations to continue to place greater emphasis on disability in international development and humanitarian efforts. His delegation was very encouraged by the Secretary-General's decision to request an internal review of the overall approach of the United Nations towards disability and looked forward to the completion in 2018 of the guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action. Guidance on disability in humanitarian aid operations funded by the European Union had also been drafted. Change was under way and was certainly possible if there was a will and a willingness to undertake it.

46. Humanitarian response must reflect the particular risks and challenges that women and girls faced during emergencies. Finland would continue to support action aimed at addressing sexual and gender-based violence and promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights. His delegation also welcomed the commitment of aid organizations to addressing sexual abuse by aid workers.

47. Improvements in terms of efficiency and effectiveness and the inclusion of persons with disabilities had proved that progress was still possible with approximately the same level of funding. It was undeniable, however, that a stronger collective effort would be needed to meet the financial requirements created by a rising number of protracted humanitarian crises. A considerable amount of the funding contributed by Finland consisted of multi-year core funding, which increased its impact. Finland encouraged more countries to participate in global efforts to help those affected by conflict and natural disasters. In that connection, the Central Emergency Response Fund was a particularly useful tool for non-traditional humanitarian donors to show their willingness to participate.

48. **Mr. Salarzai** (Afghanistan) said that humanitarian crises around the world were raising serious concerns about the protection of civilians and human rights and were impeding achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The emergency landscape in Afghanistan was one of the most complex and challenging in the world. The long-standing nature of the conflict, in addition to terrorism and violent extremism, had led to a high number of civilian casualties and disabilities, while deliberate attacks on civilian sites such as schools and hospitals had exacerbated the humanitarian crisis. Another consequence of the conflict was the protracted situation of refugees and internally displaced persons; in the past three months, Afghanistan had received over 200,000 voluntary repatriations, deportees and refugees, whose basic needs must be met.

49. A drought had officially been declared by the Government in April 2018. It was affecting two thirds of the country and threatened the lives and livelihoods of at least 2 million people, who were in dire need of humanitarian assistance for survival. It was expected to affect a further 2 million in the coming months. Drought-related migration was already under way in some provinces; if the situation grew worse, more than a million people might have to leave their homes.

50. Afghanistan had received $129 million in funding for humanitarian activities, $98 million of which was for its Humanitarian Response Plan. Afghanistan was asking the international community to fund the 2018–2021 Humanitarian Response Plan in full. The Plan had

been revised to take account of the current drought and would provide 4.2 million people with emergency humanitarian and protection assistance in 2018. For the first time, the Plan would span a period of four years, in recognition of the existence of both acute and chronic humanitarian needs in the country. Chronic needs were being addressed by the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework.

51. A comprehensive approach must be taken to sustainable development that integrated the complex challenges arising from humanitarian emergencies. In particular, it was crucial to ensure that the environmental dimension of sustainable development and related issues were addressed, such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, and effective water management to prevent crises brought on by drought. Afghanistan remained committed to working with the international community in shaping a new, more effective and comprehensive approach to humanitarian intervention.

52. **Mr. Zahneisen** (Germany) said that his delegation concurred with the way forward proposed by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. Since 1968, when his country had first introduced a budget line for humanitarian assistance, the international humanitarian system had changed beyond recognition and Germany had become the second-largest bilateral donor of humanitarian assistance. The international community bore a great responsibility to support and strengthen the international humanitarian system, and must take collective action to protect humanitarian actors on the ground, whose work was becoming increasingly dangerous.

53. Long-standing donors would not be able to shoulder the ever-increasing humanitarian needs alone indefinitely. Germany would continue to support efforts to broaden the resource base among Member States and in the private sector. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator had paved the way in his ground-breaking speech in Ireland on how to follow up on that challenge.

54. Germany remained committed to the reforms initiated at the World Humanitarian Summit. A great deal of progress had already been made but there was no room for complacency. He was heartened to see that many of the key themes from that summit were reflected in the meetings being organized as part of the segment, including a planned meeting on anticipatory approaches in humanitarian assistance and a side event on forecast-based financing that had been held just prior to the current meeting. He was glad to see the focus on sexual violence and abuse, which was an extremely serious problem.

55. The World Humanitarian Summit had looked not only at increasing efficiency and closing the humanitarian financing gap but also at reducing needs. Although the humanitarian-development nexus was not under consideration during the segment, its importance was apparent on the ground and results must be achieved.

56. Lastly, the provision of quality, principled humanitarian assistance deserved as much time and attention as enhancing effectiveness and efficiency. The most critical challenge in that regard was shrinking humanitarian space owing to limitations to humanitarian access and attacks on humanitarian personnel. To counter that trend, it was more important than ever to demonstrate and preserve the distinctive nature of humanitarian assistance.

57. **Mr. Park** Chull-Joo (Republic of Korea) said that despite the overall achievements made by the international community in 2017, humanitarian needs remained significant, owing to crisis and disasters. Assistance should focus first and foremost on the most vulnerable, including women and girls, children and persons with disabilities. It would be impossible to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development without redoubled efforts to reach the furthest behind before all else. The Republic of Korea was particularly concerned about an increased risk of gender-based violence in conflict situations. His country was prioritizing those vulnerable groups in its humanitarian policy and was fulfilling its commitment to expand support for them.

58. As humanitarian crises could no longer be separated from development or peace and security challenges, the United Nations system and its partners must collaborate and coordinate more effectively. The Steering Committee led by the Deputy Secretary-General would no doubt find ways to promote scaled-up collaboration at the country level, such as joint assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring.

59. More predictable and flexible funding mechanisms for humanitarian action were crucial, since they would enable the international community to have a greater impact on the most vulnerable groups, particularly in protracted, neglected and underfunded crises. The Republic of Korea had not only significantly increased its humanitarian support but had also increased its contribution to country-based pooled funds and unearmarked thematic humanitarian funds.

60. Improving the efficiency of the humanitarian system was the only way to make a real difference through humanitarian action, following the guidance set out in the new way of working. The Republic of Korea was particularly supportive of local capacity-building and innovative approaches, such as cash-based transfers to boost post-crisis resilience. It welcomed the draft resolution to be adopted in the coming days, in particular its increased emphasis on youth, skills training and vocational education, and the role that older persons could play in humanitarian emergencies.

61. **Mr. Kawamura** (Japan) said that the world was facing a trend of increasing humanitarian need. Conflict, economic shocks and climate change were not only causes and drivers of humanitarian crises, but multipliers as well, and political systems had failed to address those challenges. Japan had decided in February 2018 to allocate over $600 million to humanitarian aid and anti-terrorism and stabilization efforts in places such as the Middle East, Bangladesh and Myanmar. In April 2018, his Government had provided millions of dollars in support of United Nations humanitarian actions in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Japan had also offered technical assistance and created small grass-roots projects in cooperation with NGOs. It hoped that the combination of various funding mechanisms would effectively reduce humanitarian vulnerability.

62. However, those sums alone were not sufficient to address increasingly complex humanitarian crises. Effective aid that focused on impacts and outcomes was required to address needs on the ground, and therefore the humanitarian-development-peace nexus initiative was the proper approach. Because the modalities of the nexus approach might be different depending on each country's context, implementation on the ground and effective sharing of good practices must take precedence over continuing a discussion of norms and concepts.

63. Innovation could render assistance more effective. Japan would leverage technology to ensure delivery of assistance within limited resources and would pay close attention to technologies such as blockchain that could help maximize efficiency in the field.

64. **Mr. Cooreman** (Belgium) said that in 2017, the world had witnessed the greatest humanitarian crisis since the end of the Second World War, with more than 20 million people at risk of famine, and 2018 had seen a further increase in violence and insecurity. The risks faced by the most vulnerable, particularly children, were exacerbated during humanitarian crises. Guaranteeing the rights of children and ensuring respect for international law were priorities for Belgium, particularly at a time when those principles were flagrantly disregarded by parties to conflicts. Humanitarian conflicts were becoming more protracted and complex, and access to populations was more difficult.

65. Belgium had made efforts to be a modern humanitarian donor. Swiftly adapting to changes in the sector, it had expanded its budget for humanitarian aid, which had allowed it to fund activities that went beyond humanitarian needs. In line with the collective commitment to the new way of working, Belgium recommended more complementarity and more synergy between humanitarian action and development assistance in order to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people in protracted crises, as well as to address the root causes.

66. A smarter approach to humanitarian aid was needed, involving cooperation between national Governments, local communities, NGOs and the private sector. Belgium had been proactive in that area by working with the International Committee of the Red Cross and private sector entities to launch the first humanitarian impact bond, a new funding mechanism which would be deployed over a period of five years. The proceeds would be used to build rehabilitation centres in Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria. That innovative approach represented an opportunity to modernize the existing funding model. In addition, United Nations system reform provided an opportunity to improve the world's collective response to crises. Lastly, Belgium believed that humanitarian action should not be instrumentalized as a tool to promote political interests.

67. **Mr. Hofman** (Observer for the Netherlands) said that his country welcomed the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 2417 (2018), which addressed the connection between conflict and hunger. The deliberate starvation of populations was a crime and must be prosecuted. Through humanitarian diplomacy and development cooperation, the Netherlands would support humanitarian organizations in assisting people facing crises and food insecurity. Everyone should work towards zero tolerance for practices that led to food insecurity and famine, including starvation as a method of warfare.

68. More support was needed to ameliorate mental health and psychosocial issues. His Government had decided to increase its assistance to people affected by crises and disasters through psychosocial support, as too many suffered from trauma as a result of conflict and disasters. Greater attention should be paid to how to deliver mental health and psychosocial support in places that only humanitarian organizations could access.

Mental health needs should be addressed from the early stages and responses should be scaled up through simple, innovative approaches.

69. The Netherlands would continue to encourage change and innovation. It was actively promoting data-driven decision-making and robust innovation platforms and coalitions and had supported new financing instruments. In conclusion, he said that close cooperation was vital to improving the effectiveness and accountability of the United Nations humanitarian system.

70. **Ms. Stenseth** (Norway) said that all parties to armed conflict must facilitate rapid, full, impartial and unimpeded access to people in need, and must fulfil their obligations regarding the protection of civilians. Humanitarian organizations should strengthen their operational response. Concerned by attacks on humanitarian workers, Norway called on all relevant actors to implement measures outlined by the International Committee of the Red Cross and strengthen implementation of Security Council resolution 2286 (2016). Protection against weapons that caused unacceptable harm to civilians must also remain a priority. In that connection, Norway would be hosting the review conference on the mine ban convention in 2019.

71. More must be done to protect children and youth in armed conflicts. All States should endorse and implement the Safe Schools Declaration. Sexual violence in conflict was another growing concern; ensuring safe and reliable access to sexual and reproductive health care services and psychosocial support from the very onset of emergencies was crucial for effective humanitarian assistance. Measures such as the Minimum Initial Service Package were effective in preventing maternal mortality. Norway regretted that the Council had not taken the opportunity to include a stronger response to maternal mortality in its 2018 draft resolution. Norway deeply regretted that earlier agreement on that important point could not be maintained.

72. Over the past five years, Norway had increased its humanitarian budget by over 50 per cent. The country remained committed to predictable and flexible humanitarian funding and was one of the largest donors to the United Nations Central Emergency Fund. It also supported country-based pooled funds and encouraged innovative and efficient cash-based approaches to humanitarian action. Norway would work to use humanitarian and development funding to support education, health systems, jobs and social protection in fragile situations and protracted conflicts, and to build resilience against future shocks. For refugees and their hosts, it was critically important to achieve fairer responsibility-sharing through the forthcoming global platform and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

73. Norway, believed that cooperation between the humanitarian sector and development agencies would deliver more durable solutions. It would soon be publishing its updated national humanitarian strategy.

74. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that his country appreciated the role played by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and was firmly committed to applying the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Like the entire Central American region, El Salvador had repeatedly been affected by extreme hydro-meteorological events associated with climate change and El Niño that had triggered humanitarian emergencies, food insecurity and climate-related displacement. The Economic and Social Council should retain its focus on such themes and recognize the increasing impact of small-scale and gradual disasters which, although not gaining broad international attention, wrought extensive and irreversible damage on the economic, social and environment structures of Central American countries.

75. International humanitarian assistance depended on respect for international humanitarian law, which in recent years had been ignored and flouted in many places affected by humanitarian crises caused by armed conflicts. In that vein, El Salvador supported the initiative co-facilitated by Switzerland and the International Committee of the Red Cross to establish a mechanism that safeguarded the principles of international humanitarian law. It would also be useful for funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations to internalize the lessons learned at the World Humanitarian Summit, especially with regard to the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing and the empowerment of local actors as veritable partners of humanitarian initiatives.

76. The grave situation facing migrants, particularly children and adolescents, as a result of actions taken by the authorities of destination countries on migration routes was of the utmost concern. The separation of children and adolescents from their parents and their subjection to harsh conditions had negative social effects, particularly on their psychosocial development and the unity of the family. He urged authorities to discontinue such practices and make the best interests of the child their primary consideration, regardless of the migration status of parents. Separation of children and adolescents violated their human rights and aggravated

their vulnerability, with humanitarian consequences that were recognized in General Assembly resolution 69/187.

77. **Mr. Seleka** (South Africa) said that his country had increased its humanitarian assistance efforts and had worked with other countries to save lives and alleviate suffering. It had made a significant humanitarian contribution to Somalia, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Madagascar and Caribbean countries affected by hurricanes. It had also increased its contribution to the Central Emergency Response Fund.

78. The humanitarian assistance policy framework developed by the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation testified to the seriousness of the country's commitment to humanitarian diplomacy in its foreign policy. Based on the philosophy of humanity towards others (Ubuntu) and the principle of pan-African solidarity, the framework contributed to a more focused and streamlined approach to humanitarian aid support and had allowed South Africa to respond to crises with more agility and effectiveness.

79. South Africa hoped that other countries from the global South, including Africa, would also step forward. In that context, it welcomed the dialogue on humanitarian diplomacy led by the Government of Kenya and hoped that it would lead to a strong position on humanitarian assistance. South Africa was willing to help other countries by sharing information and best practices. As the incoming Chair of the association of Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (referred to as BRICS), South Africa would encourage humanitarian engagement and cooperation by those countries.

80. South Africa aligned itself with the Common African Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness and supported the initiatives of the African Union Commission to translate the decisions of its member States into concrete action. To that end, South Africa encouraged the African Union to finalize the 10-year plan for implementation of the Common African Position. Throughout its history, South Africa had often hosted asylum seekers and refugees despite economic and other challenges and remained committed to leaving no one behind.

81. **Mr. García Paz y Miño** (Ecuador) said that the frequency, intensity and duration of conflicts had resulted in an unprecedented number of people deserving the urgent attention of the international community. In 2017 — the year marking the fortieth anniversary of the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the twentieth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement — humanitarian emergencies fuelled by conflicts and natural disasters had led to yet another increase in humanitarian needs, with 135.7 million people requiring humanitarian assistance and humanitarian funding needs surpassing $23.5 billion.

82. In the New Urban Agenda, adopted in Quito, Member States committed to strengthening the coordination role of national and local governments and their collaboration with other public entities and non-governmental organizations in the provision of social and basic services for all, including to communities that were most vulnerable to disasters and those affected by recurrent and protracted humanitarian crises; developing local, durable and dignified solutions while ensuring that aid also flowed to affected persons and host communities to prevent regression of their development; and promoting more effective emergency preparation and response systems for crisis-affected persons in urban settings. Ecuador reaffirmed its commitment to promoting more effective preparedness and emergency response in urban areas in line with the New Urban Agenda, whose implementation would contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

83. Ecuador had been struck by an earthquake in 2016, affecting 241,000 people and resulting in 671 deaths in the provinces of Manabí y Esmeraldas. A network of national and international actors had provided assistance and ensured compliance with the humanitarian mandate to fully attend to people's needs. The country's most serious emergency in decades had, however, overstretched national capacities, thereby demonstrating the need for Ecuador to step up its preparation, prevention and recovery efforts.

84. **Ms. Rodríguez Camejo** (Observer for Cuba) said that Cuba fully supported the guiding principles on humanitarian assistance established in General Assembly resolution 46/182. Nevertheless, various United Nations bodies had repeatedly warned that countries most in need would not be able to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals within the time frames established, and aspects of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development that were critical for countries most in need had largely been ignored. Moreover, without genuine political will, reform of the United Nations system to complement humanitarian activities would be in vain. Tangible progress would also be elusive if Member States did not tackle the root causes of underdevelopment, poverty, the unjust and unsustainable international economic order and unequal wealth distribution.

85. Cuba had made considerable progress in the development of early warning, emergency management and recovery systems. In his report, the Secretary-General acknowledged that the country was well prepared for emergencies (A/73/78–E/2018/54, para. 35). During the recent hurricanes in the Caribbean region, its preparedness system had saved the lives of some 2 million people.

86. Thousands of Cubans had also participated in humanitarian actions to help countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia in the wake of natural disasters or epidemics. A major challenge of providing international assistance in emergency situations was to refrain from using them to justify violations of the inalienable principles of international law. That included States which fuelled conflicts within other sovereign States for political ends or with the aim of appropriating or controlling natural resources or triggering wars of aggression.

87. Any initiative to strengthen the United Nations response to humanitarian emergencies must be based on the explicit recognition of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention in the internal affairs other States. Otherwise, small countries or those with limited resources could be subjected to the whims of rich and powerful nations. Member States should improve the capacity of developing countries to tackle humanitarian emergencies by strengthening international cooperation and facilitating the transfer of technologies and knowledge. Provision of such assistance, however, should be neither conditional nor detrimental to existing development programmes and resources.

88. In conclusion, she said that Cuba wished to reiterate its support for international activities to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to respond to humanitarian emergencies on the basis of respect for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

89. **Mr. Wiberg** (Observer for Sweden) said that humanitarian needs had doubled in the past five years. Despite progress in bridging the humanitarian-development divide, global efforts to support local humanitarian action, and more targeted financing, important parts of the agenda adopted at the World Humanitarian Summit had not been implemented. Humanitarian crises required political solutions; more political leadership was therefore needed to resolve the conflicts that lay behind humanitarian emergencies and prevent future crises. Serious violations of international humanitarian law, including denial of humanitarian access, led to unacceptable human suffering in armed conflicts.

90. For decades, Sweden had been among the top six humanitarian donors and had taken an active role in promoting respect for international humanitarian law and a principled, effective and efficient humanitarian response system. As penholder with Kuwait for Security Council resolutions on the humanitarian situation in Syria, Sweden had articulated the urgent need for increased humanitarian access and protection of civilians.

91. The current humanitarian financing system would benefit from more flexible funding, which allowed for a need-based approach in both protracted and sudden onset crises. Funds should be disbursed as soon as a crisis occurred to allow humanitarian organizations to begin life-saving operations immediately. Sweden had made substantial contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund and had recently signed an agreement to contribute SEK 2.7 billion over a period of four years. Sweden had also made efforts to incentivize donors to reduce earmarked funding and provide multi-year support.

92. Although the adoption of draft resolutions by consensus required concessions from all sides, the desire to reach consensus should not override previous agreements or the need to reflect reality. In that connection, his delegation felt compelled to express concern over the regression in Council discussions of sexual and reproductive health as well as treatment of that issue in the humanitarian draft resolution soon to be considered by the Council. In 2017, over 60 per cent of maternal deaths and 45 per cent of infant deaths worldwide had occurred in countries affected by humanitarian crises. Therefore, ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights was a life-saving measure. Initiatives such as the Minimum Initial Service Package had an immediate impact on preventing maternal morality and were an essential part of humanitarian work.

93. **Mr. Scott** (Observer for Australia) said that while donor funding was currently at a record high, more than 135 million people still required assistance. The international community had fallen short in responding to that humanitarian need. The humanitarian ecosystem needed reform in order to deliver on its objectives of providing humanitarian assistance and protection that was fit for purpose and yielded the best outcomes possible for those affected by crises. To that end, Australia saw three main areas for improvement.

94. Firstly, Australia was committed to empowering local actors in disaster preparedness and response, with a focus on the Pacific region. It had helped to build capacity in natural disaster management offices and had

partnered with civil society and women's organizations. Its partnership with the organization called BRAC in Bangladesh demonstrated the value of local leadership in developing efficient context-relevant humanitarian assistance, as BRAC had been able to quickly expand its operations and leverage existing relationships to become the largest responder to the humanitarian crisis in Bangladesh.

95. Secondly, given that sexual and gender-based violence was exacerbated by crises, the protection, inclusion and empowerment of women and girls were critical to humanitarian action. Australia prioritized sexual and reproductive health services in its humanitarian responses and would support the updated Minimum Initial Service Package. Australia also prioritized inclusion of persons with disabilities in its programming through accurate data collection. Australia increasingly included lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in its humanitarian actions, given their specific vulnerabilities during crises.

96. Thirdly, targeted funding lay at the core of an effective, efficient and fit-for-purpose humanitarian system. Multi-year partnerships provided the predictability needed for humanitarian planning. Unearmarked funding made up 30 per cent of the total humanitarian funding provided by Australia, which allowed partners to respond quickly. Australia called for collective and direct strategic response plans prioritized by need, in order to attract new donors and private sector partners.

97. **Ms. Krisnamurthi** (Observer for Indonesia) said that her delegation was concerned that humanitarian emergencies were increasingly caused by the spread of radicalism, extremism and terrorism. Indonesia condemned the persistent violation of international humanitarian law and attacks on civilians, medical and humanitarian personnel and infrastructure. Given the magnitude and complexity of current humanitarian emergencies, durable solutions were required.

98. The guidelines contained in General Assembly resolution 46/182 on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance should form the basis for all responses to requests for humanitarian assistance. The principles of neutrality, impartiality, and the protection of human dignity should guide the humanitarian assistance of the United Nations and other actors. Aid should be provided based on the request of the host Government, respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries concerned. To reduce need, risk and vulnerability, root causes of humanitarian crises must be addressed.

99. Inclusive and participatory processes were imperative in humanitarian response. The Council should therefore serve as a forum for exploring the possibility of harmonizing United Nations humanitarian assistance with efforts made by regional and national entities. Furthermore, innovative financing mechanisms should be developed in order to supplement overstretched United Nations resources. Collaboration with the private sector and NGOs, for example, might help to close the funding gap. The United Nations should be commended for developing better coordination and accountability mechanisms. Given that humanitarian crises were increasingly linked to security issues, greater coherence between the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations organs, such as the Security Council, might be necessary.

100. Indonesia had introduced laws to address natural disasters and conflict management that underscored the responsibility of the Government to manage humanitarian emergencies and internally displaced persons. In 2010, the President had issued a decree on assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, and Indonesia had collaborated with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to process settlement of displaced persons.

101. **Ms. Hoang** (Viet Nam) said that her country faced significant challenges due to climate change and extreme weather events, and her Government therefore believed that reducing humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability should be placed at the top of global commitments and national policies. In 2017, typhoons, droughts and floods in Viet Nam had taken the lives of 389 people and seriously affected the livelihoods of millions of others. Viet Nam had developed policies on risk reduction and response to climate change, and, to ensure that they were implemented effectively, it had established a nation-wide network on risk reduction and disaster relief. In addition, half of the country's provinces had developed their own local action plans. Global commitments and national risk reduction policies needed adequate resources in order to succeed. It was also important to foster local resilience through education and public awareness-raising programmes so that people had the knowledge and skills necessary to respond appropriately to threats.

102. Women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities deserved special attention, as they were the most vulnerable groups during disasters or extreme weather events. Successful projects that had focused on women's participation in responses to climate change in coastal provinces had shown that such groups could be encouraged to contribute significantly to risk reduction policies. With that principle in mind, her delegation had

sponsored several initiatives on vulnerable groups at United Nations forums, including a draft resolution at the thirty-eighth session of the Human Rights Council. In conclusion, she said that a strengthened cooperation mechanism between the United Nations and regional organizations working to reduce humanitarian risk and vulnerability would be vital.

103. **Ms. Flores Flake** (Observer for Honduras) said that climate change was one of the most complex challenges of the twenty-first century since its causes and consequences were global and its impact on regions was asymmetrical, while those who contributed to it least were often the most affected by it. The burden fell most heavily on developing countries, where it threatened to aggravate vulnerabilities, erode progress and severely damage prospects for development, even as those economies were already struggling to overcome poverty and boost economic growth.

104. Central America had in the past suffered from cyclical droughts in the "dry corridor". Over the previous five years, El Niño had triggered drought emergencies in Honduras that had imperilled food security and food production and significantly reduced production of coffee and sorghum — two crops on which the national economy was heavily dependent. Without means for mitigation and adaptation, natural resources and the quality of life in the country would be critically affected. The economy, gross domestic product and any progress made towards the Sustainable Development Goals would also suffer.

105. As a matter of survival, Honduras had established a robust legal framework to address such matters, including legislation on the environment, water, forestry, protected regions and woodlands. The National Council had also approved a law on the establishment of a national directorate for climate change and specific departments responsible for monitoring implementation of the framework. Although the Government recognized the importance of securing sufficient funds to tackle climate change, the status of Honduras as a middle-income country made it increasingly difficult to access additional resources to that end. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that resources were often closely linked to priorities established in respect of official development assistance.

106. Climate change could not be tackled unless countries agreed to cooperate on a global scale. The challenge of adapting to new conditions, implementing mitigation measures, while at the same time recognizing shared but differentiated responsibilities and varying capacities, would determine the character of sustainable development in the twenty-first century.

107. **Mr. Flynn** (Ireland) said that although the gap between humanitarian needs and funding continued to grow, the humanitarian system had improved. In 2017, the Secretary-General's call to action to prevent famines in South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria and Yemen had resulted in significant mobilization by the international community, demonstrating the capacity of the humanitarian system to respond to early warnings and scale up appropriately. Similarly, while the current outbreak of the Ebola virus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was not over, the apparent stabilization in the number of cases thanks to the rapid response by the World Health Organization and others showed that the international community was learning from experience and responding faster and more effectively to crises.

108. That increase in effectiveness was the result of intensive efforts by organizations and States to put in place better emergency response systems and frameworks. As conflicts became more protracted, not only the immediate but also the longer-term needs of those receiving assistance would have to be considered. It would be crucial to move beyond the rhetoric of the humanitarian-development nexus and the new way of working to joined-up planning, shared analysis and coherent programming on the ground. Since progress had thus far been uneven, more guidance should be provided to those in the field, drawing on evidence of what did and did not work.

109. While operationalization of the nexus must be context-specific if the principles fundamental to humanitarian work were to be protected, clearer frameworks were needed in order to allow humanitarian and development actors to collaborate at the country level in the knowledge that the humanitarian space was protected. As incoming chair of the Donor Support Group of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ireland would support efforts to strengthen collaboration among humanitarian and development actors, particularly in protracted crises, while maintaining its distinct role of coordinating principled humanitarian action. Ireland also supported United Nations action to prevent sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse through a zero-tolerance approach.

110. The cases of the famines in South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria and Yemen had shown how critical it was to take anticipatory measures and act early to reduce suffering. Ireland would continue to support not only the Central Emergency Response Fund, which was a crucial tool for enabling the funding of rapid, effective and coordinated humanitarian responses, but also country-based pooled funds, since both played a vital role in funding those local and national actors best placed to react to and

prioritize emerging humanitarian needs. The provision of pooled, core and flexible funding also ensured that humanitarian organizations worked in line with humanitarian principles to reduce human suffering wherever needs were greatest. Ireland was concerned, however, that the target under the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing, namely, 30 per cent of unearmarked or softly earmarked funding, would not be reached and therefore urged other signatories to increase their unearmarked funding.

111. It was important to focus not only on global humanitarian responses but also on the root causes of suffering. The erosion of respect for international humanitarian law and the withholding of access for humanitarian aid was contributing to a global protection crisis for civilian populations. Member States must work to honour the commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit to uphold norms governing the conduct of hostilities and strengthen mechanisms for accountability and compliance with international law.

112. **Ms. Yalçın** (Turkey) said that the international community currently faced a number of humanitarian emergencies that severely affected the lives of the 65 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide and posed a self-perpetuating risk to collective security. Although humanitarian assistance could alleviate the suffering of victims, the root causes would be eliminated only through a sustainable and holistic approach. The Secretary-General had presented the tools needed for a paradigm shift in his Agenda for Humanity (A/70/709), and the World Humanitarian Summit had built on that momentum. To live up to the Summit's core commitment to leave no one behind, the international community should focus on three main objectives.

113. First, it should adopt an innovative approach to international cooperation in situations of forced displacement and a model that ensured predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing. The proximity of a country to a crisis should not determine its responsibility for dealing with the consequences. The conflict in Syria, for example, had led to the largest refugee crisis of modern times, with colossal human, economic and social costs. Turkey consequently hosted the largest number of refugees in the world and had been compelled to mobilize considerable resources for their well-being.

114. Second, Member States should strive to improve gender equality and inclusivity, as well as to eliminate gaps in the education of children, adolescents and young people. Measures to improve gender equality, which accounted for nearly 20 per cent of commitments during the Summit, would not only strengthen societies and economies, but also enhance the quality of life of communities and accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Education was also an important aspect of national and global policies in the context of humanitarian crises. Turkey had enrolled many of the 1 million Syrian children which it hosted in public schools and temporary education centres; had provided them with cash assistance; had run programmes to integrate them into Turkish society; and had trained Syrian volunteers and Turkish teachers. The implementation of the Education Cannot Wait fund, launched during the Summit to provide education in emergencies, would be key to the delivery of high-quality education by 2030 to all children affected by protracted crises.

115. Third, Member States should address the vulnerabilities of migrants and provide them with regular and lawful opportunities. Turkey was committed to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and to reinforcing its existing response capacities and building new effective partnerships. As a country at the crossroads of migratory flows, it had high hopes for both the global compact on refugees and the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. The two compacts should be finalized as soon as possible, as they would result in better coordination of policies, alleviate the burden of host countries and ameliorate the living conditions of millions of migrants and refugees. Any policy that did not have a humanitarian essence would not yield lasting solutions.

116. **Mr. Rai** (Observer for Papua New Guinea) said that his country was still reeling from the biggest natural disaster it had ever faced, an earthquake of 7.5 magnitude that had struck five provinces on 26 February 2018. Over 160 people had lost their lives; 270,000 people — some 125,000 of whom were children — had required immediate humanitarian assistance; and 147,000 people had become food insecure due to extensive landslides that had destroyed food gardens and key infrastructure. Food, water, shelter and health remained high priorities. An estimated $62 million was needed for urgent life-saving assistance and for restoring basic services. Papua New Guinea highly appreciated funds and contributions in kind provided thus far by bilateral and multilateral partners, including United Nations bodies, the European Union, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, various Member States, the private sector, faith-based organizations and civil society.

117. The recent natural disaster had shown that partnership, preparedness, and capacity- and resilience-building, as well as strong and committed political leadership, were fundamental pillars for mitigating the

consequences of disasters and designing adequate adaptive measures. The country's newly established National Disaster Management Team had drawn up the Highlands Earthquake Disaster Management Team Response Plan to cover response, recovery and reconstruction in the wake of future natural disasters. Papua New Guinea was open and committed to any partnerships in that regard which ensured inclusive engagement of affected communities.

118. The humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council was a useful platform for collectively taking stock of and addressing complex human-made and natural humanitarian issues that transcended national boundaries. The findings in the *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2018* that humanitarian concerns were becoming more frequent and intense highlighted the relevance of the theme chosen for the current segment. His delegation urged all Member States to adopt the Council's draft resolution entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations", as it would provide an indispensable platform for emergency humanitarian assistance.

119. **Mr. Muhammad Bande** (Nigeria) said that the humanitarian affairs segment was relevant in the ongoing efforts to de-escalate the upsurge in the number of intra-State conflicts since the turn of the millennium. Given that, in that time, almost every part of the world had faced humanitarian challenges that had impaired economic growth, social harmony or political stability, solutions must be found to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In Nigeria, the insidious actions of Boko Haram insurgents had placed heavy responsibilities on the Government for the management, resettlement and rehabilitation of refugees, especially as the focus of global humanitarian response mechanisms had in recent years been diverted from the issues of internally displaced persons.

120. Nigeria had recently launched its second national action plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which set out an overarching framework and five strategic pillars for women peace and security concerns in conflict, non-conflict and post-conflict situations. The national action plan had been complemented by zonal action plans highlighting regionally specific issues. In addition, each state was developing its own action plan and, in some cases, local government action plans based on area-specific peace and security concerns. That had become the national model for addressing emerging issues related to women, peace and security, such as insurgency, terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization. A national technical advisory committee had been formed to oversee the implementation of the national action plan and create an enabling environment for pursuing the gender dimensions of peace priorities.

121. The Boko Haram insurgency had resulted in a massive humanitarian crisis affecting over 1.5 million women and girls, mostly in rural communities. In response, his Government had taken decisive steps to ameliorate the plight of women and girls and others affected by the crisis, including through a robust social protection initiative and strategies to improve security in north-east Nigeria and to accelerate recovery and reintegration from a gender perspective. The national action plan had also contributed to the implementation of the Buhari Plan, which focused on the economic and social needs of women and girls in affected communities in north-east Nigeria.

122. Operation Safe Corridor, a multinational and multi-agency initiative, was designed to ensure the deradicalization, rehabilitation and reintegration of surrendered and existing Boko Haram members into Nigerian society. Many insurgents had voluntarily surrendered through the programme, while some 700 others had indicated their interest in surrendering.

123. As part of its commitment to reconstructing north-east Nigeria, the Government had entered into partnerships with humanitarian institutions and civil society organizations that had provided humanitarian relief and financial, economic, educational and psychosocial support for victims and displaced persons. A comprehensive psychosocial therapy programme was also being run for 108 of the released schoolgirls who had been kidnapped in the Chibok region. In addition, Nigeria was partnering with a number of development agencies working in the field.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.